



AOT in Action

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from Director Sherry Henry:

Good afternoon,

In just 35 days, we will officially mark Arizona's 100th anniversary of statehood! This is such a monumental milestone in the Grand Canyon State's history, and through the many upcoming Centennial events, we can all join in on the celebration.

From the Fandango and the Best Fest events to the Centennial Ride and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, these events, along with hundreds of other statewide programs and projects, have all contributed to what has become an outstanding celebration and a wonderful way to bring recognition to our amazing state.

Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime event! Be part of the Arizona Centennial celebrations! For the most up-to-date information regarding everything Arizona Centennial, visit www.AZ100Years.org.

Have a great week!

Sherry Henry
Director, Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News

Is your Community a Budding Cultural Destination? Find out through AOT's Next Workshop Series!

Join AOT, along with the [Arizona Commission of the Arts](#), as we present the next Arizona Tourism University workshop series, ***Cultural Tourism: Connecting Arts, Parks and***

Communities. This informative series focuses on how communities can identify their own unique cultural characteristics and further expand the visitor experience.

Experts from [Arizona State Parks](#), [Local First Arizona](#), and the [Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture](#) will discuss how to link businesses and organizations to create a system that supports and attracts cultural travelers.

Don't miss this opportunity to see how your community can become one of Arizona's vibrant cultural destinations!

This workshop session is the second series produced by AOT and scheduled for FY12. This fiscal year, AOT has collaborated with the [Arizona Commission of the Arts](#) in a unique partnership to reach out to new audiences and broaden workshop topic opportunities. Be sure to review the complete [FY12 ATU schedule](#).

All workshops are complimentary!

January 10

2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

[Coconino Center for the Arts](#)

2300 North Fort Valley Road

Flagstaff, AZ 86001

January 12

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Noon)

[Tubac Golf Resort & Spa](#)

1 Avenue de Otero Road

Tubac, AZ 85646

\$69 + tax room rate on 1/11, reserve by contacting Janette Romo at (520) 398-3521 or

jromo@TubacGolfResort.com

January 17

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Noon)

[Webinar](#)

To register for workshops, visit: <http://www.azot.gov/marketing-programs/arizona-tourism-university/workshop-registration>

For more information, please contact Glenn Schlottman, Community Relations Manager, at 602-364-3727 or via email at gschlottman@azot.gov.

SAVE the DATE: Wildlife Viewing as a Tourism Attraction Workshop

AOT, in collaboration with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, is offering a workshop geared toward developing wildlife viewing as a tourism attraction. More than 1.3 million people participate in Arizona's wildlife viewing contributing nearly \$1.2 billion dollars annually to the state's economy.

The goal of this workshop is to become aware of statewide opportunities that the viewing customers brings, as well as how to meet their expectations and have them return for more. Also, there will be some discussion on the activities and collaborations behind the scenes that help communities and businesses capitalize on the interests of this large and growing segment of the population.

Topics include: Partnerships, Economic benefits, Benefits of wildlife/birder oriented programs, What makes a wildlife-watcher friendly attraction, Who are the customers and what are they looking for and more.

Registration information below:

Title: Wildlife Viewing as a Tourism Attraction

Date: Thursday, January 26, 2012

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. MST

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/199976625>

For more information, please contact Glenn Schlottman, Community Relations Manager, at 602-364-3727 or via email at gschlottman@azot.gov.

Upcoming Events & Activities

UK Media Mission

Dates: January 30 – February 3

Location: United Kingdom

Go West Summit

Date: February 6 – 9

Location: Las Vegas, NV

Authentic Arizona Southwest: Real Deal Ranches and the Rest Press Trip

Date: February 27 – March 3

Location: Tubac, Sonoita, Elgin, Patagonia, Nogales and Sasabe

Industry News

Web 2.0 Plays Increasing Role in Agency Marketing

ASTA released the results of its exclusive 2011 Technology and Web Usage Report, which found that a substantial number of travel agents are using elements of Web 2.0 to enhance their networking and marketing efforts.

Now in its seventh year, the survey is the only report of its kind that specifically looks at online booking revenue, Internet usage, Web 2.0 marketing, and website development from the

agency's' point of view. The survey also looks closely at how agencies use the Web for supplier research and booking.

"Like everyone today, travel agents are under the gun to adapt to rapidly changing technology and incorporate it seamlessly into their businesses," said ASTA CEO Tony Gonchar. "Keeping up with changing technology is costly and time-intensive, and most agencies don't have the resources or personnel to do so. How agencies keep up with these changes will be a major issue going forward. ASTA is the only organization researching this subject and developing learning and training programs with the goal of assisting members with this exact challenge."

The study found that most agents are using Web 2.0 for promotion and brand-building rather than as a revenue or lead generator.

Among other findings:

- The percentage of agencies that book directly on supplier websites peaked in 2007 (93%) and 2008 (94%) and has declined slightly since to 77 percent today.
- The percentage of agencies with a website plateaued in 2008 at between 75 percent and 78 percent. Today, it stands at 77 percent.
- The percentage of revenue agencies receive strictly from online tools remains at 7 percent.
- Approximately 66 percent of agencies use Web 2.0 techniques for networking and marketing.
- Awareness, promotion, and advertising are seen as the social media goals by about half of those agencies surveyed.
- Only 39 percent of agencies have CRM software. The largest technical issues facing agencies are keeping up with technology changes and justifying the return on technology investment.
- 2011 saw a very large increase in agencies providing mobile access to itineraries for their clients from 20 percent in 2010 to 65 percent in 2011.

The ASTA Research Family, which was used for this study, is comprised of a representative sample of ASTA member travel agency owners and managers. The report indicates a 95% confidence with an error rate +/- 4.8%. (*Travel Daily News, January 4*)

TravelClick Survey Shows U.S. Hotels Set for Strong Growth

TravelClick said that, according to its December 2011 North American Hospitality Review (NAHR), hotels will continue to see strong growth in 2012, driven mostly by rate increases and steady demand for hotel rooms. The NAHR is based on actual hotel bookings from fourth quarter 2011 through third quarter 2012.

Over the next 12 months, according to the NAHR, committed occupancy is up 3 percent year-over-year, average daily rate (ADR) is up 3.6 percent, and revenue per available room (revPAR) is up by 5.3 percent.

Hotels are expected to see a 6.6 percent gain in revPAR in the first quarter, according to the survey, driven by a strong transient segment -- individual business and leisure travelers. January

and March prove to be key months in the first quarter of 2012, with 8.4 percent and 9.2 percent increases in revPAR, respectively. Overall occupancy in the first quarter is expected to increase 2.5 percent and ADR is expected to increase 3.2 percent. While group commitments for this period are set to increase 1.8 percent, average daily rates will decrease by 1.4 percent for this segment.

Markets showing the greatest year-over-year occupancy growth for the next 12 months include: Charlotte, N.C.; Detroit, Mich.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Houston, Texas; and Miami, Fla. Markets showing the weakest occupancy growth for the next 12 months include Honolulu, Hawaii; Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.; Denver, Colo.; Atlanta, Ga.; and Dallas, Texas.

Overall, fourth quarter 2011 showed a 5 percent revPAR gain compared to fourth quarter 2010, which is the slowest growth of any quarter in 2011. Throughout November 2011 revPAR increased 6.8 percent over last year with a 2.5 percent increase in committed occupancy and a 4.3 percent increase in ADR. In December, hotels experienced moderate gains in occupancy, ADR and revPAR, up 2.6 percent, 3 percent and 5.2 percent, respectively. (*Travel Pulse, January 4*)

Research Shows there Really is a Wrong Side of the Bed

Guess what? There is a “wrong side” of the bed, according to new research from Premier Inn.

“Those who have a tendency to migrate to the left side of the bed are in fact far better off than their ‘right’ counterparts,” the chain says of the old saying that someone is grouchy because he or she slept on the wrong side of the bed.

The study of 3,000 adults found that not only are those who sleep on the left generally more cheerful, but they are also more positive and capable of tackling heavy workloads and a stressful day ahead, says Premier.

“Those who sleep on the right-hand side are less likely to wake up in a good mood. Over a quarter of people who snooze on the left side of the bed feel they have a really positive outlook on life in general, compared to 18 per cent of right-side sleepers,” says the chain.

“The research clearly indicates a pattern between which side of the bed you sleep on and the mood you wake up in,” said Claire Haigh, a spokeswoman for the chain.

She added that whatever side of the bed guests’ use, they are guaranteed a good night’s sleep or receive a full refund from Premiere. (*TravelMole, January 4*)

IATA Reports Airlines Making Profits, Despite Tough Times

Airline share prices are falling to levels not seen since 2009, but their profits are good, according to the International Air Transport Association’s November-December Airline Financial Monitor. What has helped is the fact that despite weak passenger travel in November, load factors were solid. Airlines are seeing some relief from jet fuel prices, but the market is still above last year.

Although airline profits have declined over the past year, airlines did “quite well” in the third quarter, said IATA, with a sample of 61 carriers reporting \$5 billion in net profits. While operating profits were down over the year, the decline was contained to 20 percent. Regions

such as Europe, with weak economic performance, limited their third-quarter profit contraction to 5 percent, year-on-year.

But the outlook for airlines remains tough. While jet fuel prices are down from March 2011, they're still up over 2010. Passenger load factors remained flat when compared to October 2011. However, careful capacity management -- which U.S. airlines are doing particularly well at -- are helping improve yields. Average international fares also show improved yields, and are now over 8 percent higher than in November 2010. These fare levels have helped to cover costs, such as fuel, and have contributed to the reasonable profit results in the third quarter. (*Travel Pulse*, January 5)

U.S. Travel Association Reports Growth in December Travel Jobs

The latest U.S. Labor Department figures show that December was a better month for employment, which is now down to 8.5 percent with some 200,000 jobs created, as well as jobs in the travel industry.

"After falling two of the three prior months, employment in the travel industry rebounded in December and rose by 7,000 to a level of 7,528,000," said David Huether, senior vice president of economics and research at the U.S. Travel Association. "The travel industry accounted for 7 percent of the 1.6 million jobs created during the past 12 months. Over the last year, the travel industry expanded its employment base by 119,000 -- doubling the jobs created by construction and real estate industries combined."

Huether said the travel industry has created jobs at a faster rate than the rest of the economy -- 2.9 percent compared to 2 percent -- since the overall employment recovery began in March 2010. (*Travel Pulse*, January 8)

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!

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